MYTH & FACTS ABOUT PDF

MYTH:
I need to use PDF so people can't change my document.

FACT
This is the oldest PDF myth going. In fact, there are dozens of programs available that can alter PDF files as easily as HTML.

MYTH
I need to use PDF to show the document has been signed. People need the signed document.

FACT
Signatures on the Web are risky. At DOJ, to protect against identity theft, the posting of signatures is prohibited. The proper way to indicate signature on the Web is the *S-signature*, a signature inserted between forward slash marks [37 CFR 1.4(d)(2)]:

S-Signature within forward slashes, name below	/John T. Smith/ John T. Smith	**Proper Signature** Treat as signed, § 1.4(d)(2).

MYTH
PDF files are easier, faster.

FACT
Not for the site visitor. And often, by the time they are properly tagged for 508, not for you either.

MYTH
All PDFs must be tagged.

FACT
If the content is also available in HTML that has been correctly coded for accessibility, the PDF does not need to be tagged.

(APPARENT) MYTH
You just hate PDFs and don't think they should ever be used!

FACT
Not true!
PDF is a valuable application used:
- o To post files where the format needs to be preserved for later printing (i.e., fact sheets and other "tool kit" items, brochures, etc.)
- o To post files (usually lengthy) best read in hard copy.
- o To deliver (fillable) forms

MYTH & FACTS ABOUT 508

MYTH
"X" file format (Word, PDF, PowerPoint, Audio, Video, you-name-it) doesn't have to be 508 compliant.

FACT
By law, since June 25, 2001, all content created with federal monies, including federal Web sites, internal or external, government hosted or contractor hosted, must be 508 compliant.

MYTH
I can avoid 508 compliance because tagging PDFs creates an undue burden.

FACT
Forget about it. Yes, the law recognizes undue burden, but the bar is set <u>very</u> high: per the Office on Disability, the cost must exceed 5% of the total HHS discretionary budget to meet the undue burden criterion. Only two Undue Burdens have been approved in the past four years.

MYTH
I can convert *Word* documents into compliant PDF files simply by using file--> *print--> Adobe PDF.*

FACT
Word can create PDF files through the File --> Print function, but the resulting PDF file is not 508 compliant. *Adobe Acrobat Professional 7.0* or higher is necessary to create properly tagged PDF files. Note that *Acrobat Standard and Acrobat Distiller* do not create and <u>check</u> compliant files. All documents should be tagged and checked to ensure compliance.

MYTH
I can tag my PDF file to be 508 compliant by using the Advanced --> Accessibility --> Add Tags to Document function in *Adobe Acrobat Professional*.

FACT
This is only the first step to creating a 508 compliant PDF file. Adding the tags through Adobe should be followed by a 508 check: Advanced --> Accessibility --> Full Check. The document is considered 508 compliant only when the Adobe Acrobat Full Check comes back showing no errors.

MYTH

Converting my tables into PDF will make them 508 compliant.

FACT

Contractors will be the first to tell you this. It's hogwash. Require or run an accessibility report generated using *Adobe Acrobat Professional 8.0 Checker.*